

SEP 30 1957

Approved For Release 2003/12/02 : CIA-RDP75-00001R000300180001-5

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able, Toombs had been a working reporter on The Washington Daily News, The Star, and the old Chicago Times. A successful writer ("Good as Gold"), Toombs decided to stay on the job—"to see what would happen if I ran a country paper like a city newspaper. You know, print the news..."

Last week Toombs found out. With Fahnestock, he was under indictment by the St. Mary's County grand jury on charges of "obstructing justice" and maintaining a "common public nuisance."

St. Mary's County was one of the quietest farm and fishing counties in the nation until 1942, when the Navy dropped into its tranquillity the big Patuxent Naval Air Station. With a payroll of \$46 million a year, the field brought the county prosperity, a population increase from 15,000 to 40,000, legalized slot machines, and one bar for every 150 residents.

**Judicial Attack:** Under Toombs, The Enterprise took out after what it called "the courthouse gang's" alleged efforts to take advantage of prosperity. In the last two years the paper has succeeded in forcing a reorganization of the county liquor-license board, the school board, and the building-permits board. But most importantly, it attacked Philip H. Dorsey, the plump county Democratic leader, when Dorsey successfully ran for Circuit Judge last year. The Enterprise declared Dorsey would use his office to "reward his friends."

Two weeks ago, Toombs charged that his prophecy had proved correct. Unlike every other county in Maryland, St. Mary's has two property boards, instead of one, to review citizens' complaints about road-building condemnations. In an editorial entitled WHAT EVER HAPPENED TO THAT OLD GANG? Toombs answered his own question: Many of Judge Dorsey's "old gang" were on the two boards, which had been set up at his suggestion, and all, while serving, were getting a handsome \$60 a day in remuneration. That was the last straw for the judge. At his suggestion, the grand jury indicted Toombs and Fahnestock.

**Memorial:** This week they were to come into court (possibly before Judge Dorsey, with the judge's son, State's Attorney Walter Dorsey, prosecuting). Almost certainly the case would eventually be thrown out of court on the grounds of the First Amendment. Yet one monument would remain.

Last week as the cornerstone for a new county courthouse was being laid, it was suddenly noticed that no copy of The Enterprise was being included in the steel memorabilia box. Quickly, a paper was inserted. It carried the headline: JURY INDICTS EDITOR, PUBLISHER, ON DORSEY'S CONTEMPT CHARGE.

"Damn it," said Toombs. "There it is for posterity."

## The Editor Who Stayed

Two years ago, Sheridan Fahnestock, publisher of the weekly Lexington Park (Md.) Enterprise, asked his friend Alfred Toombs to take over the paper "for a week" while Fahnestock went on vacation. Stocky, pink-faced, and person-



Associated Press

Toombs: 'Like a city newspaper'

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